

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DOGGETT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CLYBURN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CARSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, we have seen unprecedented suffering in this Nation in the last weeks. No one in this country has been able to comprehend the size and scope of the destruction. To put it into perspective, one of my colleagues pointed out that the size of the area affected is the size of Wyoming. Another pointed out that the size of the area affected was equal to the nation of Great Britain. So as we talk about our failures and our successes, I think it is important that we really discuss Katrina in an overall view.

I know that from my perspective there are going to be three major challenges. We have to deal with the human suffering that is felt by every one of the families who have lost loved ones but also by those people who are displaced. So the human suffering in terms of jobs lost and regaining jobs of any sort, regaining an income in order to pay for current expenses, some way to access the safety nets that this Nation is providing, that is one challenge of the problem.

The second challenge is rebuilding the entire gulf coast region, and that is going to be a long and arduous task and one that is going to require the dedication and commitment of the entire Nation.

But the third thing that I think we must be aware of as leaders and as the House of Representatives is the effect on our economy.

So tonight I am joined by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS). We would like to discuss the effects of Katrina that we see and the things that we think the Nation should be aware of as we move into the days ahead. I would like to discuss some of the responses that we have seen and some that we have not seen.

But at this point, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) to talk about his perceptions of the disaster and the destruction that we have seen.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

This tragedy is of grave proportions, as evidenced by the unprecedented meeting of the President's Cabinet here tonight, Mr. Speaker, who spent 3 hours with us discussing a wide range of responses from government agencies, of agencies of the State as well as the local level, but particularly looking at the response that was engendered by this.

I think the one thing that we can clearly say, looking at history, looking at this response and looking at others is there is no substitute for leadership and initiative, particularly on the front lines and in the local level; and there are countless stories of individuals and communities who rose to the occasion, ranging from mayors of small cities, pastors of churches, small business owners who all gave of themselves to make a tremendous difference, as the military and national response was able to come into an area that was devastated and largely inaccessible. I would point out that the response has been actually unprecedented in scale.

When we think about this, I would like to bring some perspective to my colleagues. No disaster, no natural disaster, has struck this Nation of the proportions that Hurricane Katrina has in terms of its devastation and its impact. Nearly 90,000 square miles were affected by this. That is an area approximately the size of Great Britain, approximately the size of the State of Wyoming. When we begin to look at that, I do not believe that there is any agency that had fully prepared or built the infrastructure for that level and certainly the city of New Orleans did not have the wherewithal, just the simple hydraulics and physics of it.

But the one thing that I want to point out is that people in neighborhoods rose to the occasion, individual citizens rose to the occasion. And many of my colleagues have risen to the occasion, abandoning the legislative role during that last week of the

recess, working in everything from relief positions to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY), one of my colleagues, a physician, who helped in the start-up of hospitals, coordinating rescue operations from his district in Lafayette. I look at communities in the surrounding States and throughout the country who have responded with an incredible amount of magnanimity, of charity, of compassion, of love and outreach to see these people have a hope and an opportunity and a future.

In some ways, Mr. Speaker, I have to share candidly, as a former military professional, I was somewhat disappointed with some of the media coverage. I felt that it neglected many of the great works that were being performed by people in hidden places throughout the communities that were affected. Just as an aside, the Coast Guard rescued more people in the last week than four times what it would do in a typical year. That is simply remarkable, the ability to stage those resources in there and begin that response. When I look at the amount of rescues that have had to be performed for nearly 60,000 people who were trapped on rooftops and structures, public safety professionals, military professionals, National Guard resources from all over the United States are pouring in. Even before the storm hit, resources were being mustered around the United States, even from our own fourth district.

The day after the storm, I ran into early Tuesday morning a convoy of vehicles from our own Owen Electric Cooperative that had been on two prior hurricane responses and were on their way to lower Mississippi to the central staging area. There was a concerted response of private groups, of public groups coming together to deal with the tragedy whose magnitude no one could have imagined.

For a week now, we have watched the heartbreaking scenes of death and destruction in Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. So many people left homeless, left without anything except the clothes they were wearing and one or two precious items that they could grab as the flood waters deluged their homes. As we grieve over this unimaginable horror, we have also watched in unmistakable awe ordinary people who have opened their hearts, their homes, their pocketbooks to these storm victims. Families who have little to spare themselves are taking in entire families of strangers simply because someone else is in need. This is the American way of selflessness and generosity. There is no ulterior motive, no agenda; and there is nothing but the simple desire to help, to lend a hand, to reinforce the dignity of every individual who is affected by this great tragedy.

The city of Houston, Texas, has done something unprecedented. And I point out that in the tsunami and in other disasters in other parts of the world no country, no people have ever responded with the level of outpouring of response of individuals to local, State

and Federal Government agencies as we have seen in the last 7 days. I think that is an important point of perspective that we keep in mind. The level of this tragedy was equal in magnitude to any of the countries that were hit by the tsunami, and when we look at the response of our people here, it has been simply phenomenal from a perspective of infrastructure.

In that outpouring in Houston alone, 225,000 people have been received into that city. The people of Texas have set an example of compassion and leadership. Other States around the country are receiving people, colleges, universities, communities, homeless shelters even. And I look at that, and I see in virtually every State, all of our States along the Ohio Valley, where I live, are seeing the same level of compassion. It has been simply overwhelming. They have responded to a grave situation by giving hope, by giving opportunity, and helping communities to ultimately reestablish while the water is being removed, while an infrastructure that no longer exists is being put back in place.

Things that are important to remember from a standpoint affecting the entire country as we are dealing with the human tragedies, we are dealing with the health care issues, as we are providing refuge for those who are affected by this storm, crews from industry, from the private sector, from our national security organizations have responded. By the end of this week, our national refineries in the gulf will be back at 95 percent of production. That is a tremendous statement.

□ 2310

Our pipelines are going to be open again to make sure that that critical infrastructure is working. The on-water transit capability is going to be back in operation very shortly, and hopefully, we will see that port open up. Why that is so important is restoring normalcy and restoring employment, vocation, jobs and restarting that market economy and rebuilding the foundations of those communities over time.

I think it is also important to remember what the national response is. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, it took nearly 6 months to stage the 250,000 troops into Iraq, including the infrastructure that they needed, only crossing one major water obstacle, a river with most of the bridges intact. As of tomorrow, there will be nearly 50,000 soldiers in the disaster area, mobilized in less than 1 week. That, again, is a testimony to the resourcefulness of the response and capability of our military, of our National Guard, and I think they need to be commended for what they are doing. Our first responders have done an outstanding job. Many are overwhelmed, out of resources, are taking the initiative to do the things that are necessary to make sure that lives can be saved, that people can be kept healthy.

In my district, Kentucky's Fourth, the largest medical center, St. Eliza-

beth's Hospital in Florence, recently sent about 15 medical personnel, including a dozen nurses and two pallets of medical supplies to a staging center in Louisiana. St. Luke's Hospital, also in Florence, also sent medical personnel to the Gulf Coast. And my church, Grace Evangelical Free Church, is sending its third truckload of supplies to the region this weekend.

Last Tuesday morning, as I mentioned, the utilities crews that were heading south, not to mention truckloads of equipment that passed through my district on I-75 headed toward the disaster areas. We have seen vehicles coming from as far away as Canada, but from all over the United States, that are converging to provide the resources to help stabilize that situation and rebuild it. This is a beacon of outstanding response. There is no perfect response to any unpredictable situation, but I want to look at and commend the adaptability of our people who have responded on the scene and those who have opened their pocketbooks, opened their resources and lent their hands from around the United States.

The city of Covington, Kentucky, sent a truck loaded with water, sports drinks and other provisions to its unofficial sister city of Covington, Louisiana. There was a report of a woman who arrived in Covington in a beat-up car and who was described in a newspaper report as not looking "like she had a penny to spend," but she brought \$100 worth of supplies because she simply cared. Covington City officials were also waiting to learn how many people would be traveling to their area of northern Kentucky for temporary housing. Northern Kentucky University is reaching out to take in as many students as it possibly can. Communities around our district, as with many, many congressional districts around this country, are responding with an openness and a charity that I think sets an example of brotherly love and compassion that honors the spirit of our founders in this country.

Then, there is Mike Detzel and Dave Yeazell who loaded up a van with 3,900 bottles of water and drove south from Florence, Kentucky, to Slidell, Louisiana. Prior to making this trip, Mr. Yeazell gave money to the Red Cross and Mr. Detzel and his wife offered spare rooms in their homes to the evacuees. But like so many others, they wanted to do more.

One of the things I have always admired most about our country is our willingness to give and to want to help. We respond to international tragedies with such an outpouring of generosity that we are left breathless by the momentum. And now that we have been hit here at home by a tragedy of almost biblical proportions, it seems there are no boundaries to the generosity of our people and the response from around the United States.

As difficult as this time is for the storm's victims, we must approach this

carefully and orderly to be sure that the supplies reach the people who need them the most. People in the disaster areas need to know they are cared about; there is concern and outpouring from around this Nation; and this country will not let up until every person is found; and no one will be left behind.

We also have to give thought to the Housing issues in the long term to those who have lost their homes in the wake of this deadly storm. So many cities throughout this nation are taking in evacuees on what is being called a temporary basis. Mobile home manufacturers in our area are responding with upgraded production and, in many cases, donated mobile homes to be sent into the disaster areas, as is happening around the country. There is a long-term need for housing, for schools, that needs to be addressed, and it will be addressed by this body as well as local governments, and it must be addressed sooner rather than later.

I think those of us who are in a decision-making position who have not been directly impacted by this tragedy have overcome our initial shock. We are past denying that it is not going to turn out as badly as we think. The harsh reality is it turned out much worse than anyone could have imagined or frankly could have planned for. Now we need to focus on long-term solutions for the evacuees, the survivors and rebuilding the region and the economy and the communities that these people have spent their lives building prior to this impact.

I think, in the long term, the ultimate benefit of this is going to be a great demonstration of the American spirit, Mr. Speaker, but also along those same lines, in this new world that we live in today, the silver lining in this is going to be a response to potential great disasters that could befall this country. God forbid they ever happen, but the lessons that we should learn out of this will provide the wisdom, the knowledge, the planning infrastructure to respond to far greater threats that may emerge in the future.

I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to share. I appreciate his leadership on this issue and his ability to put this together on such short notice.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for his comments and for his heartfelt expressions of what this Nation is about.

I wanted to discuss briefly the fact that there is great concern about the responses of our Nation, and we were treated tonight to an unprecedented, unprecedented in my tenure here in this Congress, 3 hours from administrative Cabinet-level Secretaries being here to address this House of Representatives and answer questions and be accountable. The information shared was extremely timely and was poignant.

I would point out that one of the most impressive things to me was the responses of our military, and again, as

we talk about the numbers of military, keep in mind that they may sound like a lot, but spread over 90,000 square miles, spread over the entire region of Great Britain, then we begin to understand just the proportions of responses that were actually required.

Before the hurricane ever struck, a state of emergency was declared by the President. So we had a couple of days of lead time before Katrina actually begins to hit and move. This is a time line from August 26, 27, 28 and on, so we have Katrina hitting Florida about this point. We have already at that point activated troops in both Louisiana, listed in blue, and then Mississippi, listed in green. So we have activated troops prior to the hurricane actually moving into the Gulf.

As it moved closer and closer into New Orleans and actually strikes New Orleans at this point, we can see that the troop level is now at 5,000, most of those troops in Mississippi; about half in Mississippi and about 40 percent in Louisiana. Then, the next day, we have an increase then to almost 8,000. Within 24 hours, now we are up to 10,000 troops, and we can see that the increase of troops has gone to where we have now 60,000 troops mobilized and on scene in this 90,000-square-mile region. Tomorrow, there will be an additional 10,000 troops. We will have at that point about 70,000 uniform personnel. About 43,000 of those are National Guard members, and about 17,000 of the ones on duty today are active duty military.

But we also have to understand that the Coast Guard was able to be activated, and the Coast Guard rescued more people, about three times more people in this 1-week period than they normally rescue in about a 1-year period. About 60 percent of the helicopters available to the Coast Guard were actually activated and being used.

□ 2320

And one of the problems that we faced is that communications throughout the region were just almost nonexistent; and especially as you went deeper into the highly populated area of New Orleans, the flood waters obliterated most of the communications systems. The wireless communications were not available. Cell phone communications were not available. The regular telephone communications were not available. So even if we had people there and on-site, they could not necessarily be directed right to the points where the problems were.

But the responses that many are finding inadequate, and we have to admit as a Nation, the President, I think, said it best, that he appreciated the strength of responses, but they did not result in the kind of results we would have wanted to have.

But once we get past that, we must evaluate what we should do in the future, not just try to point fingers in the current circumstance. I would point out that there is still much work

to be done. So as we in this city begin to concentrate on recriminations and asking for resignations, what we are actually doing is distracting from those people who are actually on-site and trying to go through their jobs.

There will be plenty of time to give consideration to the problems and the flaws that we did face. But at the current point I think that our administration is focused correctly on what we should be doing currently to ease the suffering of those people who have been displaced, to regain the control of the city's infrastructure, to re-establish the infrastructure in the city and in the rural areas that surround New Orleans, but also dealing with the misery of lost lives.

The one thing that I think is extremely important for us to address with respect to New Orleans is the economic impact that we are going to face just from the loss of refining capacity.

I have had good questions that are raised by constituents and friends of mine about why the price of gasoline would be jumping as it relates to this emergency, and so I would like to go through just a brief discussion about the components of production and the price of gasoline.

We, first of all, need to be aware that gasoline is the end product, that we actually get it as a refined product of crude oil. To get crude oil, the first thing that we must do is to drill wells. And so, as I just put up here the basic sequence of getting refined gasoline, the first thing that we have to do as a Nation is drill oil wells or gas wells. And be aware when we are talking gas we are talking natural gas, not gasoline. But we drill. And when we drill successfully, we have oil that then must go through pipelines, and so we have got a transportation question here.

Once the pipelines conduct the oil, usually it is carried to refineries, and so we have got the refinery then accepts the oil, and from the refinery then we get to usually a series of products. But the ones that most of us would be familiar with would be that we get either gasoline, which we get at the pump, or we get diesel which, again, many of our trucks going across the highways would use.

Finally, then jobbers, these are independent, usually, operators who would go to the refinery and pick up gasoline in 10 or 12,000 lots and deliver it to service stations. So we then have the trucking from the refinery and finally to the service station.

Now, that entire process is very complex. Just the drilling of the oil well might take 30 to 50 days, even for shallow oil wells. For the deep ones like you see offshore from New Orleans, we are talking billions of dollars and years to literally put these facilities into place.

But then the conducting of the oil through the pipelines. Again, we put it in the refinery. It is at that point we begin to extract the oil or the gasoline

or the diesel from the basic crude oil that comes from the oil well, and then the trucking to local service stations; and at that point, then you, as consumers, would drive up to the service station and access the fuel.

And what we see over here as a price, generally, the average price across the country has dropped a couple of cents in the last couple of days. But basically right now the retail price average for the Nation is about \$3.04.

If we consider the source of that \$3.04, where does that number come from, we have got a couple of charts that are extremely instructive. And the first one would show that when we have \$3.04 of gasoline at the pump, that a \$1.70 of that is created from the cost of crude oil itself. Refining creates \$0.79 of the \$3.04, and then the taxes that we add on top of that are the equivalent of \$0.55.

Now, you can see that the cost of crude oil is the dominant component. About 55 percent of the price that you pay at the pump is going to come from the price of oil. So as we talk about the price of oil nationwide, it is in the high \$60 range, and then has recently peaked up almost into the 70 or maybe into the \$70 range, and then has decreased back down. And you would ask what effect is Katrina going to have on the price of gasoline at the pump, and why would it have the effect.

The chart that I have got here shows the track of Katrina coming in. It came across Florida, swung down into the gulf. Actually as it cleared through Florida, it decreased to about a Category 1 storm, and the speculation was early that it would simply bring rain across the southern gulf coast. But what it actually did was circulate out south into the gulf, pick up energy from the systems that were already in the gulf, and then it swung back toward the gulf coast here.

And what is depicted right here in the dark zones are the oil platforms off the coast of southern U.S. there and the Gulf of Mexico. Also, we have got refineries that are listed here.

So two things happened that are going to affect the price of gasoline as far as this storm is concerned. One is we lost some production from these platforms off in the Gulf of Mexico. But then secondly, we lost almost all of the refining capacity here in this region around Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. Now, that represents about 25 percent of our Nation's refining capacity.

We heard testimony tonight from the Secretary of Energy that much of that refining capacity is shut down simply temporarily. We have got about four of the 13 refineries that are going to suffer long-term damage, and it is still unknown. But let us say that we lose about 20 percent of our refining capacity. Then we can see that what we are doing is we are going to limit the amount of gasoline that is produced, and it is going to drive the price higher.

We have got several things that are driving the price of gasoline higher right now worldwide. One of the factors that we tend not to think of, we understand as a Nation we have increased population and we have increased the amount of driving, and so we know that we, as a Nation, are demanding more petroleum products, more gasoline.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for the remaining 30 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. The thing that we do not often think about that drives this price higher is the fact that the emerging nations, China and India and the other emerging nations, are demanding tremendous high quantities of fossil fuels because that is the fuel of emerging economies. It is the fuel of our economy.

□ 2330

So worldwide, the demand for oil and gas is spiraling up, and yet we have limited supplies. Now, we as a Nation have made decisions that limit, first of all, the supplies of gasoline because we have not permitted new refineries in the past 30 years. It has been almost 30 years since we have built a new refinery. And only this year, earlier this year, did we even permit a new refinery, and it has not yet been built.

So one of things that is escalating the price of gasoline is that we have reached our capacity in refining. Not only is the price of crude oil going up, it has gone from \$25, 3 or 4 years ago now, to \$67, so that you can see the dominant cost of a price of gasoline coming from crude oil about 55 percent, we would expect that that would drive the price of gasoline higher. But then we have arbitrarily as a Nation chosen to limit our productive capacities because of the unnecessarily complex regulatory procedures that affect the permitting of new refineries.

Now, those are choices that we have made, and we are at the absolute capacity of our Nation to produce gasoline so that, for the first time in our Nation's history, we began to get gasoline in through imports, and that is not a good sign for the future of our economy because our economy, again, is built on affordable energy. We, now, then, again with Katrina coming in to the Gulf Coast region, we have lost somewhere between 5 and 20 percent of our refining capacity. That is going to then drive down the supply of gasoline available at the pump which is going to drive this price up. Now, the effect on our offshore platforms will not be such a large effect.

This Nation uses approximately 21 million barrels a day. The Gulf Coast region produces about 1.5 million barrels of crude oil a day, and so you can see that less than 5 percent of our productive capacity comes from this region. So even though we suffered some damage as a percent of our overall sup-

ply of crude oil, it is not going to be that large of an effect. Again, the largest effect coming from the restrictions to our refining capacity that we are going to find.

Now, as a side note, we as a Nation have chosen to limit the amount of crude oil that we produce so that we import more crude oil today than ever before in our Nation's history. We import about 13 million barrels a day, most of it coming from the Middle East, from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and those nations. We also get oil from Mexico. We also get oil from Venezuela.

Now, another factor that is going to very much affect the price of gasoline that we pay at the pump will be that Venezuela is currently talking to the nation of China, and China is trying to talk them into a 100-year contract with all of the production from Venezuela going to China for the next 100 years.

Now, we as a Nation get 15 percent of our imported oil from Venezuela. So you can imagine that, if that contract goes through with China, taking away the production that we currently get from Venezuela, sending it to China, that we are going to see possibly a 10 or 15 percent jump in prices.

Now, we have made choices to limit the amount of drilling that we do in this Nation so that we will be more immune to price manipulation from overseas from those countries that would import or export into us, and some of those choices are, for instance, in ANWR. Back in 1995, this Congress, both House and Senate, voted to drill in ANWR. That is an oil preserve, a wildlife preserve in Alaska. And there was a piece set aside strictly to do this drilling which has been stalled out by extremists. And so we as a Congress, both House and Senate, passed a bill which would allow drilling in ANWR, and President Clinton then vetoed that. If we had passed that bill and had it signed at that point, we would be experiencing about a million and a half barrels a day of production which would come down to this area.

Now, again, that is about the amount that we have gone in the past, and when we would get price spikes, we would go to the Saudi Arabians and ask them if they would increase production by a million and a half barrels a day to help us lower the price of gasoline at the pump and keep our economy on sound footing. But we instead did not pass that bill that would allow the drilling in ANWR, and we as a Nation now are facing these \$3.04 averages. That is an average price. Actually, some places are paying a much higher price, but we are experiencing these prices of gasoline because of past decisions that we have made to limit drilling. This is ourselves. We as a Nation are limiting our drilling, but we also have limited our refining capacity.

Now, the energy bill that we passed recently, people would ask exactly what effect is that going to have on the price of gasoline at the pump. I would

tell you that mostly what we did are things that would, long term, begin to limit our need for mostly natural gas. Natural gas is used to produce electricity, and we had great stimulation in the bill which would affect nuclear. We have also had great stimulation for many other renewables, both solar, wind, bio-mass and other forms of renewables energy. But those are long term.

The only thing that really would affect the price of gasoline today is to increase the amount of crude oil production; that is drilling for more wells or to increase our refining capacity. Either one of those could have an effect on the price of gasoline today. But again, we, as a Nation, politically have decided in the past not to do that. And those are questions that we need to be asking ourselves right now.

How high is the price of gasoline going to go before we think that we as a Nation should permit more refineries to be built? I think that we have passed that point.

Now, my office, I am going to introduce in the coming week, we are proposing legislation that would in response to Katrina take the Federal excise tax off of gasoline. Currently, again, referring back to our chart, the price of gasoline is about \$3.04; 55 cents of that \$3.04 is made up of taxes. About 18.4 cents is a Federal tax. And our suggestion is that we as a Nation consider limiting that tax for a period of 6 months, so that the price of gasoline would fall immediately by 18.4 cents. And so you can see that we would be back under \$2 a gallon for gasoline. But that is merely a short-term solution.

In the long term, if we want to affect the price of gasoline, we must increase refining capacity or we must increase drilling. In the past, we have implemented different methods of or different measures which would restrict our capabilities or voluntarily restrict our use, but what we found is, as we got more mileage in cars, then people simply drove more because they are going to spend a certain amount of their budget for mobility. That is the way we as Americans are. Now we can agree or disagree with it, but we found that those measures that were designed solely to increase the mileage of our cars in the past actually did not lower the demands for gasoline, but simply we drove more miles demanding more gasoline.

Now, one of the effects that I would like to visit about briefly before we finish is this trucking. Now, in my chart here, again we have got drilling, pipelines, refining, trucking to our local community and then the service station. But if we think of trucking in addition to not only trucking the gasoline from the refinery to a service station, then putting it in tanks at the service station, if we think about the trucking of all the goods and services along the highways; when you are driving along and you see the motorcades of hundreds of thousands of 18 wheelers

moving along, those are taking goods that have been produced across this Nation and delivering them to the points of use or marketing and that those truckers are experiencing extremely high cost increases because they demand a lot of energy.

□ 2340

They demand a lot of diesel, and the price of diesel is extraordinarily high right now.

So we have tremendous downward pressure on our economy. It is one of the reasons that we are suggesting that the Federal taxes could be deleted for a period of 6 months to give us a chance to evaluate just what the effect of this storm Katrina is going to be, but in addition, it allows us to begin to have this debate on how complex do we have to make it for ourselves to build new refineries.

I think we know the elements of refining that would create difficulties in our environment. No one is going to watch as our environment is spoiled, but right now, we are limiting ourselves arbitrarily, even though we know the safety standards that we need to implement. I, for one, feel like we can do both. We can have safety and create new refineries at the same point. Likewise, we have limited drilling for the same purpose. I think that we can drill in an environmentally safe manner, and we are going to either have to do that or watch as the price of our energy increases. Katrina has simply accentuated the pressures that already existed inside our economy, and it is time for us, as a Nation, to look at the effects of our decisions in the past.

I would like to conclude my statements this evening by saying that, again, our hearts and our prayers go out to the people who have been suffering tremendously from this storm. We have seen the hearts of the Nation open up and accept these people who have been dislocated and have been taken in all across the Nation, into homes and into churches and into the Astrodome in Texas. I think that speaks so well of the compassion of this Nation and of our willingness to give of ourselves at a point where someone else is suffering.

I think that in the days ahead we are going to see this Nation pool its resources, to pool its ingenuity together. We are going to see people really begin to buckle down to approach the problems that we, as a Nation, are facing right now, and in a unified fashion, I think that we will see New Orleans cleaned up. I think that we will see a rebuilding effort across the entire Gulf Coast region. I think that we will see those economies come back into those States and communities that have been devastated by these current situations.

Again, we, as a Nation, owe it to ourselves to understand the full ramifications of what we face, and we owe it to ourselves to reinvest in those areas that have been so prolific and are so important to this Nation's economy.

New Orleans not only has the refining capacity, they not only have the offshore platforms through Louisiana, offshore from Mississippi and Texas, but they process many, many of our grain crops on the way outbound as we export them. Many of the imports coming in come through New Orleans. It is an extremely vital and important part of this Nation, and I join with the rest of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle saying that we feel like that the days ahead will see the most magnificent responses to some of the most deeply felt problems this Nation has ever seen, from either a natural or unnatural disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chair for allowing me to address the situations that have occurred in the Gulf Coast.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. BERKLEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

Mr. CARDIN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mrs. MALONEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness in the family.

Mr. MELANCON (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of district business relating to Hurricane Katrina.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of district business relating to Hurricane Katrina.

Mr. CONAWAY (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

Mr. PICKERING (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of Hurricane Katrina.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. MCKINNEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MCKINNEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DOGGETT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CLYBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CARSON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, today and September 7.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, today and September 7 and 8.

Mr. BURGESS, for 5 minutes, today and September 7.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and September 7 and 8.

Mr. NORWOOD, for 5 minutes, September 8.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, September 7.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, September 7.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 172. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the regulation of all contact lenses as medical devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

S. 501. An act to provide a site for the National Women's History Museum in the district of Columbia; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. Trandahl, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3645. An act making emergency supplemental appropriations to meet immediate needs arising from the consequences of Hurricane Katrina, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Jeff Trandahl, Clerk of the House reports that on September 2, 2005 he presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 3645. Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act to Meet Immediate Needs Arising From the Consequences of Hurricane Katrina, 2005.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 422, I move that